

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3392

INFO USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

USMISSION OECD PARIS

USMISSION EC BRUSSELS

AMEMBASSY OTTAWA

AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY PARIS

C O N F I D E N T I A L L O N D O N 1 1 8 4 2

C O R R E C T E D C O P Y (P A R A 3)

E.O. 11652: XGDS-1

TAGS: EGEN

SUBJECT: COMMONWEALTH EXPERT GROUP

REF: LONDON 8230

SUMMARY: UK PARTICIPANT WAS FAIRLY WELL SATISFIED WITH REPORT OF COMMONWEALTH EXPERT GROUP AS IT EMERGED FROM OTTAWA MEETING LAST WEEK. WHILE REPORT REPRESENTED CONSENSUS RATHER THAN COMPLETE AGREEMENT AND HE AND OTHERS HAD TO ENTER RESERVATIONS, MODERATE APPROACH GENERALLY PREVAILED. END SUMMARY.

1. SIR DONALD MAITLAND, FCO, UK PARTICIPANT IN COMMON-CONFIDENTIAL

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WEALTH EXPERT GROUP FORMED FOLLOWING KINGSTON MEETING,

GAVE US HIS REACTIONS TO GROUP'S REPORT AS AGREED AT OTTAWA MEETING IN LUNCHEON CONVERSATION YESTERDAY. HE SAID REPORT WILL BE CONSIDERED AND PRESUMABLY APPROVED AT MINISTERS MEETING IN GEORGETOWN AT END OF AUGUST IN TIME FOR SEVENTH SPECIAL SESSION UNGA.

2. REPORT AS MAITLAND SEES IT WAS GENERALLY MODERATE. THERE WERE SOME "NEGATIVE" ACCOMPLISHMENTS, I.E. AVOIDANCE OF DISRUPTIVE IDEAS WHICH LDC MEMBERS MIGHT HAVE PUSHED, E.G. RECOGNITION OF ROLES OF GATT AND IMF. IN SHIPPING, ENDORSEMENT OF CODE OF CONDUCT FOR LINER CONFERENCES WAS AVOIDED.

3. ON COMMODITIES, THERE WERE PROBLEMS WITH SOME MEMBERS OF GROUP WHO ADVOCATED INDEXATION IN SPITE OF ALL THE PROBLEMS INVOLVED, BUT GROUP CONCLUDED WITH AGREEMENT THAT SUBJECT SHOULD BE STUDIED IN CONTEXY OF PARTICULAR COMMODITY PROBLEMS. MAITLAND COMMENTED IN THIS CONTEXT THAT WE HAVE GOT TO TALK ABOUT INDEXATION WITH THE PRODUCERS. HMG HAS NOT CHANGED POSITIONS IN ANY WAY ON INDEXATION, I.E. THAT IT IS GENERALLY OPPOSED AND DOES NOT SEE INDEXATION AS A SOLUTION OR FEATURE OF COMMODITY AGREEMENTS EXCEPT POSSIBLY FOR VERY SHORT TERM BECAUSE OF UNWORKABILITY IN OPERATION OF MARKETS, BUT THAT LDCS AND ALL OF US COULD BENEFIT FROM THOROUGH AIRING OF SUBJECT. ON THE OTHER HAND MEETING ENDORSED BOTH STABEX CONCEPT AND INCREASED USE OF IMF COMMODITY FACILITY.

4. ALONG WITH REJECTING INDEXATION AS A GENERAL SOLUTION, MAITLAND SAID IT WILL GO A LONG WAY WITH THE LDCS IF WE CAN ACCEPT THE CONCEPT OF SEEKING TO NARROW THE RICH COUNTRY-POOR COUNTRY GAP AND HE COULD SEE A USEFUL DIALOGUE IN THE NEXT YEAR OR TWO IF THIS CONCEPT IS ACCEPTED. REPRESENTATIVES PRESENT AT OTTAWA AGREED PRIVATELY GAP WILL NOT BE CLOSED IN A HUNDRED YEARS BUT CONSIDERED ACCEPTANCE OF CONCEPT NEVERTHELESS IMPORTANT. / MEETING ULTIMATELY CAME UP WITH WORDING WHICH HE COULD ACCEPT SINCE UKG IS COMMITTED TO CONCEPT, THOUGH THERE WAS A GOOD DEAL OF HAGGLING OVER SPECIFIC WORDS.
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5. RESERVATIONS OF GROUP MEMBERS WERE EXPRESSED GENERALLY, NOT RELATED TO SPECIFIC POINTS OF REPORT.

6. MAITLAND SAID COPIES OF REPORT NOT YET PHYSICALLY AVAILABLE, US WILL HAVE A COPY AS SOON AS POSSIBLE. HE SAID PETER PRESTON, WHO REPRESENTS UK AT OECD HIGH LEVEL GROUP ON COMMODITIES, WILL ATTEND GEORGETOWN

MEETING. HE DOES NOT ANTICIPATE FURTHER MEETING OF
EXPERT GROUP UNLESS GEORGETOWN MEETING SHOULD GIVE IT
FURTHER TERMS OF REFERENCE ON MORE SPECIFIC PROBLEMS.

RICHARDSON

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